

Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 SS-15 CCO-00 SSO-00 /019 R

DRAFTED BY PA/M:JCHAMBERLAIN:JC

APPROVED BY PA:WDYESS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL -

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WALL STREET JOURNAL EDITORIAL FRIDAY
DECEMBER 10 HEADED "CARTER AND SALT."

2. THE MOST TOUCHING NOTE IN THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE TRANSI-
TION IS THE SOVIETS' ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEY WILL NOT
PROVOKE A RISKY CONFRONTATION TO TEST PRESIDENT CARTER.
OF COURSE. FIRST THEY WILL TRY TO GET WHAT THEY WANT FOR
FREE.

3. SINCE THE FIRST ITEM ON THE SOVIET AGENDA CLEARLY IS
WINNING FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITA-
TION TALKS, MR. CARTER NEEDS TO THINK THROUGH HIS POSITION
ON THE SUBJECT. HIS REMARKS SO FAR DISPLAY A DIVIDED
MIND.

4. THE BAD PARTS OF HIS COMMENTS ARE THE THINGS HE HAS
BEEN SAYING RECENTLY ON TELEVISION INTERVIEWS: THAT IT'S
TERRIBLY IMPORTANT TO GET THE TALKS MOVING, WHICH IS
SCARCELY THE POSTURE TO STRIKE WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT TO BARGAIN

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WITH RUSSIANS. AND THAT THE TALKS HAVE BEEN STALLED BY

DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE U.S. BUREAUCRACY, WHICH ABSOLVES

THE SOVIETS OF ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN INTRANSIGENCE.

5. IN FACT THE RECORD OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IS BEST SUMMARIZED AS THIS: THE SOVIETS HAVE DEMANDED CONCESSION AFTER CONCESSION--FIRST THE THROW WEIGHT ADVANTAGES CODIFIED AT VLADIVOSTOK, THEN THE EXEMPTION OF THEIR BACKFIRE BOMBER FROM THE LIMITS AGREED THERE, THEN THE INCLUSION OF THE U.S. CRUISE MISSILE NEVER DISCUSSED AT VLADIVOSTOK, AND FINALLY AND PREPOSTEROUSLY THE COUNTING OF EACH B-1 BOMBER AS EQUIVALENT TO THREE MISSILES. SO LONG AS THE U.S. GAVE IN TO EACH SUCCESSIVE DEMAND THE TALKS SHOWED "PROGRESS." WHEN THE U.S. STOPPED GIVING IN, THE TALKS STALLED. THERE WERE DISAGREEMENTS IN OUR OWN BUREAUCRACY OVER WHETHER TO RESUME GIVING IN, AND SECRETARY KISSINGER AND HIS AIDES ARE PEDDLING THE LINE THAT THE TALKS WERE STALLED BY THESE DISAGREEMENTS. THIS IS TRUE ONLY IN A LIMITED SENSE, INDEED, A WARPED ONE.

6. THE GOOD PART OF MR. CARTER'S REMARKS WAS MOST EVIDENT IN HIS NOVEMBER 15 PRESS CONFERENCE IN PLAINS. HE SAID THAT PENDING A FINAL AGREEMENT ALL POINTS AGREED SO FAR ARE SUBJECT TO RENEGOTIATION. THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE GOOD MEANS OF ASSURING SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH ANY AGREEMENT, PROBABLY INCLUDING ON-SITE INSPECTIONS. THAT THE OBJECT OF NEGOTIATIONS OUGHT TO BE A FREEZE AT PRESENT WEAPONS LEVELS, FOLLOWED EVENTUALLY BY REDUCTIONS. THAT HE WOULD SEEK "A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN DEPENDENCE UPON ATOMIC WEAPONS."

7. IN THESE REMARKS THERE IS THE NUCLEUS OF A SOUND ATTITUDE TOWARD SALT. WE HOPE THAT RATHER THAN RUSHING INTO FURTHER TALKS, MR. CARTER DOES TAKE THE TIME FOR A ZERO-BASE REVIEW OF THE CONCESSIONS SO FAR. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A PROPOSAL FOR OUTRIGHT WEAPONS REDUCTIONS TO EQUAL LIMITS, AS LONG PROPOSED BY SENATOR HENRY JACKSON AS A TEST OF SOVIET INTENTIONS. AND IF THE BOTCH ALREADY MADE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS CANNOT BE ENTIRELY REPAIRED, A REASON-

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ABLE NEXT STEP MIGHT BE TO DEFER THE BACKFIRE AND CRUISE MISSILE ISSUES, LIMITING OTHER BOMBERS AND BALLISTIC MISSILES AS ORIGINALLY CONTEMPLATED AT VLADIVOSTOK--SWALLOWING THE THROW WEIGHT DISADVANTAGES AND THE BACKFIRE, BUT AT LEAST PRESERVING THE CRUISE MISSILE.

8. THE ISSUE OF THE CRUISE MISSILE IS HIGHLY PERTINENT TO MR. CARTER'S REMARKS ON BOTH COMPLIANCE AND NUCLEAR

DEPENDENCE. THE WEAPON IS ESSENTIALLY A DRONE AIRCRAFT WITH SUPER-ACCURATE GUIDANCE. THE U.S. HAS A SUBSTANTIAL LEAD IN THE GUIDANCE TECHNOLOGY, AND STOPPING FURTHER

DEVELOPMENT IS CURRENTLY THE NUMBER-ONE SOVIET OBJECTIVE IN SALT. BUT THE PROBLEM OF MONITORING SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH CRUISE-MISSILE LIMITS IS SIMPLY IMPOSSIBLE. TO TAKE BUT ONE OF A LONG LIST OF DIFFICULTIES: THE SOVIETS ALREADY HAVE LESS ACCURATE CRUISE MISSILES, AND THERE IS NO WAY TO TELL WHAT GUIDANCE MIGHT BE INSTALLED.

9. IN THE REAL WORLD THE WAY TO DECREASE DEPENDENCE ON ATOMIC WEAPONS IS TO RELY MORE HEAVILY ON CONVENTIONAL ONES. THE SOVIETS, IN FACT, ARE PUSHING THE IDEA OF A MUTUAL PLEDGE NOT TO MAKE FIRST USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THIS IS NOT A BAD IDEA, EXCEPT THAT THE DEFENSE OF OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES IS BUILT AROUND TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE CRUISE MISSILE IS SO ACCURATE IT MIGHT BE ABLE TO PERFORM MOST OF THE SAME MISSIONS WITH CONVENTIONAL WAR-HEADS. ITS DEPLOYMENT FOR THESE PURPOSES WOULD MAKE NUCLEAR WAR LESS LIKELY, AND WOULD MAKE THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE MORE CREDIBLE. THE OPPORTUNITY WILL BE LOST IF THE WEAPON IS KILLED.

10. WE HOPE THAT MR. CARTER AND HIS CLOSE ADVISERS RECOGNIZE THE FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS OF THESE ISSUES. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, WHETHER IT WAS BY PLAN OR THROUGH INADVERTENCE THAT HIGH ON HIS LIST OF POTENTIAL DEFENSE SECRETARIES IS HAROLD BROWN, WHO HAS ADVOCATED GETTING THE ARMS TALKS "MOVING" BY SHARP LIMITS THAT WOULD PROBABLY STOP THE CRUISE MISSILE PROGRAM IN ITS TRACKS. AS A MATTER OF SELF-EDUCATION, MR. CARTER NEEDS TO KNOW THE PENTAGON'S CASE BEFORE MAKING HIS UNCLASSIFIED

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EVENTUAL DECISION, AND WILL NOT PROFIT FROM A DEFENSE SECRETARY WHO WILL WORK THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET.

11. MR. CARTER'S POSITION ON SALT, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE CRUISE MISSILE, WILL GO FAR TOWARD DETERMINING THE SHAPE OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY, THE SUCCESS OF HIS DIPLOMACY, AND VERY LIKELY THE TENOR OF THE ISSUES IN HIS REELECTION CAMPAIGN. SO FAR HE HAS BEEN GIVING MIXED SIGNALS ON THESE ISSUES, AND WHILE HE NEED NOT RUSH INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES, IT IS NONE TOO SOON FOR HIM TO START WORKING TOWARD A COHERENT APPROACH. (END TEXT.) ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, TEXT, SALT (ARMS CONTROL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE300850
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JCHAMBERLAIN:JC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760457-0054
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761252/aaaabtfz.tel
Line Count: 165
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 JUN 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS MATERIAL -
TAGS: SOPN, OVIP, UR, US, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006